

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 AGR-10 AID-05 EB-07 AF-06 ARA-10 EA-09 EUR-12

NEA-10 COME-00 ISO-00 TRSE-00 L-03 FRB-01 OMB-01

TAR-01 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 OIC-02

SIL-01 STR-04 CIEP-02 CEA-01 /109 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000E

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FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: FAO EAGR UNWFC

SUBJ: FAO COMMITTEE ON COMMODITY PROBLEMS: ROUNDUP OF FIRST WEEK

/SUMMARY./

MAIN INTEREST DURING FIRST WEEK CENTERED ON FUTURE PLACE OF CCP IN ENLARGED FAO COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND ON PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE COMMODITY STRATEGY. COMMITTEE DECIDED IT SHOULD MAINTAIN ITS TRADITIONAL ROLE, PREFERRING COOPERATION WITH OTHER COMMITTEES TO ANY TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITIES. COMMITTEE DECLINED TO ENDORSE PROPOSED STRATEGY ON COMMODITIES, ALTHOUGH SECRETARIAT AUTHORIZED TO PASS DOCUMENT TO UNCTAD FOR INFORMATION. OTHER ITEMS ROUTINE. /END SUMMARY/

1. 50TH SESSION OF CCP MOVED SMOOTHLY THROUGH FIRST FOUR AGENDA ITEMS DURING WEEK OCTOBER 13-17. AS EXPECTED, ITEMS III.1 AND IA.1 AROUSED CONTROVERSY, BUT DEBATE THROUGHOUT REFLECTED FOCUS ON ISSUES AND WAS GENERALLY FREE OF THE POLEMICS AND ACRIMONY WHICH CHARACTERIZED 49TH SESSION. THIS ATTRIBUTABLE TO CHARACTER OF LDC REPRESENTATIVES, MOST OF WHOM RELATIVELY NONPOLITICAL AND LOW KEY, AS WELL AS TO UNCLASSIFIED

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IMPROVEMENT IN POLITICAL CLIMATE AS RESULT OF UNGA 7TH SPECIAL SES-

ION.

2. PLENARY WORK ON FUTURE ROLE AND WORK OF CCP (ITEM IV.1)
REVEALED STRONG DESIRE OF MOST DELS TO PRESERVE INTEGRITY OF
CCP AND TO OPPOSE TRANSFER OF ANY OF ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES
TO PROPOSED NEW STANDING COMMITTEES OF FAO COUNCIL. USDEL
SOUGHT SUPPORT FOR VIEW THAT AFFINITY OF WORK OF CCP WITH
PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY (CWFS) AND OVERLAPPING
IN TERMS REFERENCE ARGUED FOR SHARING OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND
PERHAPS AMALGAMATION, BUT WITHOUT SUCCESS. MOST DELS CONSIDERED
FORMATION OF CWFS FOREGONE CONCLUSION AND CHIEFLY INTERESTED IN
PRESERVING RIGHTS AND POWERS OF CCP. OVERWHELMING MAJORITY
FAVORED ALLOWING INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUPS ON GRAINS AND RICE TO
SERVICE BOTH BODIES, WHILE REMAINING INTEGRAL PART OF CCP
STRUCTURE. USDEL ATTEMPTED TO INSERT PROCEDURAL LANGUAGE IN
FINAL REPORT WHICH IN PRACTICE WOULD HAVE REQUIRED THAT MEETINGS
OF CCP AND CWFS BE JOINT OR CONSECUTIVE, BUT THIS WAS REJECTED
BECAUSE SOME COUNTRIES WANT FLEXIBILITY IN CWFS SCHEDULE AND PLAN
USE OF DIFFERENT PERSONS AS DELEGATES. ALTHOUGH THERE IS NOW
NO CONSENSUS ON THIS, MANY DELS AS WELL AS CHAIRMAN JANTON SHARE
US PREFERENCE FOR JOINT OR CONSECUTIVE MEETINGS, WHICH POSSIBLY
COULD LEAD TO EVENTUAL AMALGAMATION. AT 67TH FAO COUNCIL,
USDEL SHOULD STRESS THIS APPROACH ON GROUNDS OF EFFICIENCY,
CONCENTRATION OF RESOURCES, ETC.

3. REGARDING PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO GENERAL RULES OF THE ORGANIZA-
TION CONTAINED IN PARA 21 OF DOCUMENT CCP 75/19, ALMOST ALL
DELS SUPPORTED OBJECTIVE OF AVOIDING DUPLICATION. US-PROPOSED
REVISION OF DRAFT LANGUAGE ADOPTED WITH ONE ADDITION, AS FOLLOWS:
"THE COMMITTEE SHALL TAKE FULL ACCOUNT OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES
AND ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY AND OF
THE COMMITTEE ON FOOD AID POLICIES AND PROGRAMS IN ORDER TO AVOID
UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION OF WORK, WHILE FULFILLING ITS ROLE AS THE
BODY WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR COMMODITY
ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION, AND RELATED POLICY MATTERS COVERING ALL
AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES."

4. COMMITTEE HAS ALREADY ADOPTED SECTION OF ITS REPORT
COVERING THIS ITEM, TO FACILITATE PROMPT CIRCULATION BY SECRETARIAT
TO COUNCIL. OUTCOME REPRESENTS ACHIEVEMENT OF MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF US
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POSITION.

5. DEBATE ON COMPREHENSIVE COMMODITY STRATEGY (ITEM III.1)
COMPLETED OCTOBER16, BUT SOME DIFFICULTIES IN DRAFTING GROUP
STILL LIKELY. COMMITTEE DECLINED TO RECOMMEND STRATEGY, EVEN
IN PRINCIPLE AS REQUESTED BY SECRETARIAT.
NEARLY ALL DC DELS EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS, SOME STRONGLY.
POSITION OF LDCS NOT UNIFORM, WITH SOME SUPPORTING AND OTHERS

HEDGING. COMMITTEE CONCLUDED THAT FURTHER WORK NEEDED TO REVISE AND GIVE MORE SPECIFICITY TO PLAN AND THAT THE SUBJECT COULD BE FURTHER CONSIDERED AT NEXT SESSION.

6. DEBATE ON THIS ITEM WAS DIFFUSE, WITH MOST DELS APPARENTLY WISHING TO AVOID CONFRONTATION. COMMENTS FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON QUESTIONS OF FORM RATHER THAN SUBSTANCE, SUCH AS APPARENT DUPLICATION BETWEEN PROPOSED STRATEGY AND WORK OF OTHER BODIES, PARTICULARLY UNCTAD, INTERNAL INCONSISTENCIES AND LACK OF DETAIL. GENERAL VIEW WAS THAT NEED FOR FAO ROLE IN SUPPORT OF COMMODITY NEGOTIATIONS ELSEWHERE WAS QUESTIONABLE. UNCTAD REPRESENTATIVE (CHIDZERO) ASSERTED OPENLY UNCTAD'S CLAIM OF CONTROLLING THE "ACTION" IN COMMODITY TRADE, WITH FAO'S ROLE ONLY MARGINAL.

7. CHAIRMAN'S SUMMING UP OF DEBATE ALLOWS DIRECTOR GENERAL TO CIRCULATE PROPOSAL TO DECEMBER MEETING OF UNCTAD COMMITTEE ON COMMODITIES AS A SECRETARIAT DOCUMENT FOR DISCUSSION. IT WOULD THEN BE FURTHER REVIEWED BY 51ST SESSION OF CCP IN LIGHT OF DECISIONS AT UNCTAD IV. DC DELS, ALTHOUGH OPPOSED TO TRANSMITTAL OF DOCUMENT TO UNCTAD, UNDERSTOOD SECRETARIAT'S DESIRE TO AVOID BEING EXCLUDED ENTIRELY FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION WORK IN FIELD OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY POLICY, AS NEARLY OCCURRED AT UNCTAD III. WITH PRESSURE FROM LDC DELS, CHAIRMAN WORKED OUT COMPROMISE WHEREBY COMMITTEE WOULD WITHHOLD ENDORSEMENT OF PROPOSED STRATEGY BUT SECRETARIAT WOULD HAVE FLEXIBILITY TO USE DOCUMENT IN CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. USDEL RECOMMENDS THE US POSITION FOR AGENDA ITEM 9.1 OF 18TH FAO CONFERENCE ANTICIPATE AND FIRMLY OPPOSE EFFORTS BY SOME LDCS TO OBTAIN CONFERENCE ENDORSEMENT AND REFERRED TO UNCTAD IV OF COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY.

8. DISCUSSION OF INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT, CCP MEMBERSHIP AND COMMODITY PROJECTIONS WAS ROUTINE AND UNCLASSIFIED

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